



City Neighborhood Council

c/o 700 Fifth Ave, Suite 1700, PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649

Telephone: (206) 684-0719 Fax: (206) 233-5142 TDD: (206) 684-0446

DISTRICT COUNCILS:

- Ballard
- Central
- Delridge Neighborhoods
- Downtown
- East
- Greater Duwamish
- Lake Union
- Magnolia/Queen Anne
- North
- Northeast
- Northwest
- Southeast
- Southwest

January 29, 2008

Councilmember Sally Clark

Chair, Planning, Land Use, and Neighborhoods Committee

Seattle City Council

600 Fourth Avenue, 2nd floor, P.O. Box 34025

Seattle, WA 98124-4025

Dear Councilmember Clark and the PLUNC committee:

The annual process for review and amendment of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan is an important opportunity for the City to engage in dialogue with its citizens about the policies that are in the Plan or could be. This includes goals and policy statements from the Neighborhood Plans.

As you know, under state law, the City can consider amendments to the Comprehensive Plan only once a year. The City Neighborhood Council understands that, unless it is changed, the deadline for submitting proposals will be considered to have been Jan. 18; with the City reserving the right to delay until spring 2009 the consideration of any proposed amendment received later (even Jan. 20, according to the Department of Planning and Development web site) that is not personally sponsored by a member of the City Council.

Request that deadline be extended to March 1. We request that the January deadline be extended to March 1st. The January 18 deadline fell too close to the holidays and did not allow sufficient time for citizens, community organizations, and District Councils or the CNC to meet and discuss the submission of potential amendments.

There are several problems with the saying that citizens who missed the hidden Jan. 18 deadline can jump the deadline by asking a City Councilmembers to sponsor their proposal: (1) Most citizens will be unaware of this option; (2) Worthy proposals will fail to receive analysis unless a City Councilmember can be found to sponsor them, when it is the initial analysis that actually may help interest a Councilmember in the proposal.

Request that the City Council and DPD do outreach between now and the new March 1 deadline. We also request that the City Council do thorough public outreach to inform citizens about the 2008 opportunity to submit proposed revisions for the Comprehensive Plan. As you know, legislation passed last year gives the City Council a greater role than previously in managing the process by which Comprehensive Plan amendments are considered. Unfortunately, the City Council has not yet recognized in this new role its responsibility for ensuring that the public is made aware of the deadline. This year, the only publicity we can find is a mention in the January DPD newsletter and a mention on the DPD web site. In fact, for the past three years, there has been no real outreach and publicity through mailings, e-mails, fliers, posters, ads, press releases, or public meetings about the initial deadline or about opportunities to comment on the proposed amendments.

Throughout the 1990s, DPD and the City Council did an excellent job of public notice and outreach regarding the opportunity and deadline for submitting Comprehensive Plan amendments. We suggest that the City restore these and other avenues to inform the public about the annual deadline for submitting proposed amendments, and the opportunity to comment on the proposals that have been made. We suggest that DPD and the City Council quickly work out a joint public outreach plan that lists methods, deadlines, and responsibilities.

Similarly it would be helpful if the on line version of the Comprehensive Plan could be updated before the deadline each year so that the most current amendments are available along with the bulk of the plan. For example, at [http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/Planning/Seattle's Comprehensive Plan/ComprehensivePlan/default.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/DPD/Planning/Seattle's%20Comprehensive%20Plan/ComprehensivePlan/default.asp) the link to "What's New in 2007" takes the reader to the amendments adopted in 2006.

Please ensure that DPD and the City Council extend the deadline to March 1, 2008 for nominating Comprehensive Plan amendments; and please insist on better publicity regarding this deadline and opportunity. This letter was authorized at the January 28 meeting of the City Neighborhood Council.

Sincerely,



Chris Leman
Chair, City Neighborhood Council
cleman@oo.net, (206) 322-5463



Irene Wall
Chair, CNC Neighborhood Planning
Committee
iwall@serv.net, (206) 784-8731

cc: Mayor, City Councilmembers